
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6622

AN ACT CONCERNING DISTRICT PARTNERSHIPS.

SUMMARY:

Beginning with the 2013 school year, this bill allows a school district designated as an alliance district to mutually agree with a charter school within the district to use academic achievement scores of the charter school's students as part of the district's overall scores. Under current law, this is permitted as a pilot program for the Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven school districts. By law, unchanged by the bill, the State Board of Education (SBE) must approve these agreements.

The bill expands the type of charter school that can enter into these agreements to include local charters. By law, state charters, which are granted by SBE, are already permitted. Local charters, none of which are in Connecticut, may be granted by local boards of education.

The bill also changes the reference of academic achievement from the current terms of "adequate yearly progress and academic performance" to the "calculation of the district performance index" (DPI). DPI is the method of measuring academic performance using a district's standardized test scores. Under a 2012 law (PA 12-116), DPI is used to determine which 30 districts are designated as the lowest performing districts. These are the alliance districts that, under the same law, receive additional state assistance because they are low performing. The bill specifies that the State Department of Education (SDE) will calculate the DPI.

The bill also extends, from October 1, 2013 to October 1, 2014 the deadline for SDE to report to the Education Committee on the DPI scores reported under the bill.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2013

BACKGROUND

District Performance Index

A school district's DPI is its students' weighted performance on the statewide mastery tests in reading, writing, and mathematics given in grades three through eight and 10, and science in grades five, eight, and 10. The index is calculated by:

1. weighting student scores in each of these subjects as follows: zero for below basic (the lowest score), 25% for basic, 50% for proficient, 75% for goal, and 100% for advanced;
2. adding up the weighted student scores for each subject;
3. multiplying the aggregate student results in each subject by 30% for mathematics, reading, and writing and 10% for science; and
4. adding up the weighted subject scores.

The weightings produce the lowest indexes for districts with the lowest test scores.

Alliance Districts

An alliance district is a town whose school district is among those with the lowest academic performance as measured by the DPI. Beginning in FY 13, alliance districts' increase in education aid under the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) program will not be released by SDE unless the district agrees to take certain steps to improve student performance. These districts also received a greater increase in ECS than non-Alliance Districts.

Related Bill

HB 5499, reported favorably by the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, requires each state public institution of higher education with a teacher preparation program to establish an internship program that encourages students to tutor children in alliance districts.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 33 Nay 0 (03/22/2013)